

Those who have bravely served our country in uniform deserve to be protected as best we know how – not just with armaments, equipment, and training while they serve – but also with access to the benefits they earned once they leave the service. As a member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee and Chairwoman of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee, I will always work hard to ensure all veterans receive the benefits they deserve such as access to top-notch health care, education benefits and services for our disabled veterans. Congress must continue to work hard to honor our nation's sacred commitment to our veterans.

### **Veterans legislation**

I have been proud to see several of my initiatives to help veterans become law during my tenure in Congress.

- The Disabled Veterans Adaptive Housing Improvement Act – Increases the amount to be provided for construction of specially adapted housing for disabled veterans.
- Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act – Provides special adaptive housing assistance for disabled members of the Armed Forces residing temporarily in housing owned by a family member.
- Services to Prevent Veterans Homelessness Act – Authorizes the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide financial assistance to nonprofit organizations and consumer cooperatives that provide support services for very low-income veterans occupying permanent housing.
- Increase Funding for State Approving Agency Offices – Prevented a scheduled reduction in the reimbursement to the State Approving Agencies that administer veterans' education benefits.
- Injunctive Relief for Veterans Act -- Requires the appropriate U.S. district court to use its equity powers to fully vindicate a veteran's employment or reemployment rights under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) with respect to a state or private employer.

### **Women Veterans**

Women are one of the fastest growing segments of our nation's veteran population. The VA and Congress must work toward improving the care available to our women veterans. That includes improved access to gender-specific care, a better understanding of the barriers women veterans face when seeking care, medical care for the newborn children of women veterans and enhancement of sexual trauma and PTSD treatment for women. I've introduced H.R. 1211, the Women Veterans Health Care Improvement Act, which works to answer some of those challenges.

### **Veterans Education Benefits**

I support efforts to improve the many education benefits available to our veterans, including the Post-9/11 GI Bill, a new program which more accurately reflects the service commitments of today's veterans. I have worked to provide proper oversight of that program and the other education benefits managed by the VA, and will continue to work with the VA and other Members of Congress to strengthen and improve these programs.

### **Transition Assistance**

Congress must do more to help our servicemembers make a successful transition from active duty service to civilian status. I have introduced legislation to expand the U.S. Department of Labor's Transition Assistance Program, which helps veterans with employment assistance, job training and other transitional services.

### **VA Budget**

To ensure that veteran health care is fully funded and not subject to the annual appropriations process, I support advanced appropriations for VA health care, and specifically H.R. 1016, the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act, of which I am an original cosponsor. I have been pleased by the support of the Obama Administration for this proposal, which will provide our veterans a higher level of care by placing the VA health care accounts on a two-year budget cycle.

### **Veterans Employment**

I have introduced and supported legislation to help address the unacceptably high rates of veterans who are unemployed. This legislation ranges from measures to help veterans in danger of becoming homeless, to legislation improving protections for federally-employed veterans, and legislation enhancing the U.S. Department of Labor's system of training

employment specialists to help veterans.

### **Disability and Retirement Issues**

I support concurrent receipt and believe military retirees should be able to receive both military retirement and veterans' disability payments. I will continue to work with the VA and Congress to develop ways to alleviate the backlog of veteran claims.

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